(b) if so, the steps taken thereto; and

(c) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Yes, Sir. The then Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee had made an announcement of a special package to create employment and self employment opportunities for 25000 unemployment youths in Nagaland.

(b) and (c)ATask Force under Chairmanship of Secretary, DONER was constituted for this purpose.

Direct tax arrears

3436. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the arrears of income tax, corporate tax, direct and other indirect taxes for the year 1997-98 to 2004; year-wise;

(b) whether any action has been taken to collect the arrears;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The amounts of arrears of direct taxes for the year 1997-98 to 2003-04 are as under:

Financial Year	Amount of Direct Tax Arrears*
	(Rs, in crore)
1997-98	42,947
1998-99	44,293
1999-2000	51,337
2000-01	59,453
2001-02	72,671
2002-03	72,290
2003-04	87,885

*Figures are not maintained separately for Corporation Tax and Income Tax.

As far as indirect taxes are concerned, the information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Government has constituted Task Forces to develop and implement multi-pronged strategy for effecting substantial recovery from arrears of direct and indirect taxes. Further, so far as the direct taxes are concerned, steps taken include making it statutorily obligatory for the income tax Appellate Tribunals to decide such appeals, where stay has been granted, within 180 days of the date on which the stay order was passed; restricting the powers of the Commissioner of the Income Tax (Appeal) to set-aside a case or refer it back to the Assessing Officer for fresh orders; issuing comprehensive instructions for recovery of tax demand to the field units; raising the monetary ceilings in respect of various l-T authorities for exercising the powers to write-off of irrecoverable arrears; setting up of Special Units for recovery of outstanding tax dues, etc.

So far as indirect taxes are concerned, a special multi-pronged drive has been launched to recover the arrears. Special recovery cells are constituted in Commissionerates to monitor the recovery of arrears of Service Tax revenue. Further steps being taken include speedy action for recovery of realizable arrears of duty, monitoring cases before different Courts/Tribunals, moving petitions before Courts and other appellate authorities for early hearing and disposal of pending cases and expeditious disposal of cases pending with Commissioner (Appeals) etc.

(d) In view of reply to (b) and (c) does not arise.

Policies of banks towards rural people

3437. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:

DR. T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Rural Development has expressed unhappiness over policies of banks towards rural people;

(b) whether Swamjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna of Government did not do well in some areas because of some bank branches;

(c) if so, whether the Ministry of Rural Development has approached the Finance Ministry to urge banks to provide liberal loans to rural poor; and